

In response to the Lockerbie disaster, a meeting of the ICAO Council was held at its Montreal Headquarters in February 1989. Transport ministers from ten countries passed a resolution at this time calling for improved detectability of explosives on board aircraft, and requesting a further development of standards to strengthen aviation security.

In January 1989 the NATO, Warsaw Pact and neutral European countries signed an East-West Agreement on Human Rights which includes several articles condemning terrorism and presses for an increase in national and international efforts to combat terrorism and "insure the extradition or prosecution of persons implicated in terrorist acts."

In late June 1989 US and Soviet experts met for the first time in Moscow in order to determine possible areas for bilateral cooperation and coordination in counter-terrorism efforts, including exchanges of information. However, both sides refrained from officially giving any details on the meetings.

State-sponsored terrorism has become of increasing concern for Western states in recent years. Several events in the past year underscore this, such as the allegation that Libya was building a chemical weapons plant which could have been used to supply several known terrorist organisations, and the Iranian-sponsored death threat against British citizen Salman Rushdie. A joint political declaration issued by the Group of Seven in July 1989 at the Paris Summit reaffirmed the industrialized countries' commitment to fighting terrorism, and stated that "in particular, they condemned state-sponsored terrorism."

#### CURRENT CANADIAN POSITION

A recent publication by the Department of National Defence reports that, in relative terms, there has been a low level of international terrorist incidents directly affecting or involving Canada.<sup>1</sup> A similar conclusion was reached by a Senate Special Committee on Terrorism and Public Safety in 1987, which nevertheless stated that "terrorism presents one of the principal security threats to Canada today in terms of immediacy, but not severity" and that "international terrorism presents a major challenge to Canada, to Canadian policy, to intelligence and to law enforcement, currently and for the foreseeable future."<sup>2</sup>

Incidents such as the 1985 seizure of the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa by Armenian gunmen and the Air India crash over the Atlantic which killed 329 persons, demonstrate that Canada is not invulnerable to terrorist acts. More recently, in April 1989, a Canadian resident of Lebanese origin hijacked a bus and held several people hostage on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The hijacker, Charles Yakoub, claimed to represent the Front

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Kellett, *Contemporary International Terrorism and Its Impact on Canada*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, Operational Research and Analysis Establishment, Report No. R100, February 1988.

<sup>2</sup> William Kelly, *Report of the Senate Special Committee on Terrorism and Public Safety*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, June 1987, pp. 1 and 8-9.